

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 13295 041635Z

62

ACTION NEA-16

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4298

INFO AMEMBASSY ANAKRA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

UNCLAS NEW DELHI 13295

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR IN IR

SUBJECT: THE SHAH'S PRESS CONFERENCE IN NEW DELHI

SUMMARY: IN A WIDE-RANGING PRESS CONFERENCE OCTOBER 3, THE SHAH OF IRAN SOUGHT TO REASSURE INDIA ABOUT IRAN-PAKISTAN RELATIONS, TALKED SOME MORE ABOUT HIS CONCEPT OF AN INDIAN OCEAN COMMUNITY, URGED UNIFORM OIL PRICES AND JOINT OIL-DEVELOPED COUNTRY ASSISTANCE TO LDC'S, TOOK A TOUGH LINE TOWARD IRAQ, LINKED DIEGO GARCIA TO THE SOVIET NAVAL PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN, AND FENDED OFF QUESTIONS ABOUT NUCLEAR COOPERATION. WE ARE SEEKING A FULL TRANSCRIPT. THE SHAH LEFT DELHI OCTOBER 4, WITH THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE SCHEDULED TO BE RELEASED LATER IN THE DAY. END SUMMARY.

1. PAKISTAN: ASKED WHETHER IRAN WOULD SUPPLY AMERICAN ARMS TO PAKISTAN, THE SHAH SAID THAT THE QUESTION WAS "IRRELEVANT" BECAUSE IRAN WAS A "FIRM FRIEND" OF INDIA AND BECAUSE IRAN'S "CARDINAL POLICY" WAS TO SEE PEACE ESTABLISHED BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN. IRAN "SHALL NEVER

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 NEW DE 13295 041635Z

ASSIST PAKISTAN IF SHE STARTS AN AGGRESSIVE WAR ON INDIA,"

HE REITERATED. ALSO, "I AM SURE THAT INDIA IS NOT GOING TO THREATEN PAKISTAN JUST FOR THE SAKE OF IT. I AM CONVINCED THAT WE MUST CONTINUE TO ENDEAVOR TO BRING PEACE IN THE REGION AND UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THESE TWO COUNTRIES." ASKED ABOUT RECENT "PROVOCATIVE" STATEMENTS BY BHUTTO AND THE FUTURE OF CENTO, THE SHAH REPLIED THAT HE WAS NOT CLEAR TO WHICH STATEMENTS THE QUESTIONS REFERRED, BUT IN ANY CASE HE HAS ALREADY MADE IT CLEAR THAT IRAN "WILL NOT SUPPORT ANY COUNTRY IN AN AGGRESSIVE MOVE." ON CENTO, HE SAID THAT ITS ROLE IN PAST WARLIKE SITUATIONS WAS "PRACTICALLY NOTHING". IT HAD BEEN "RATHER A CLUB WHERE WE CAN MEET AND TALK AND DISPERSE WITHOUT ACHIEVING MUCH." "MY OWN IDEA IS THAT ALL THESE PACTS SHOULD DISAPPEAR ONE DAY. MY OWN IDEA IS THAT ONE DAY WE WILL HAVE TRUE, CONTROLLED WORLD DISARMAMENT." EVENTS IN PAKISTANI BALUCHISTAN WERE AN INTERNAL POLITICAL PROBLEM, HE SAID, ADDING, "NOW WHAT IS THE BEST WAY FOR PAKISTAN TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM IS A DIFFERENT QUESTION." ON THE RELATED ISSUE OF PAKISTAN-AFGHANISTAN RELATIONS, HE SAID, "THEY ARE BOTH OUR CLOSE NEIGHBORS; WE HAVE FRIENDLY AND BROTHERLY RELATIONS WITH BOTH. WE ARE TRYING TO BE HELPFUL TO BOTH, WHERE WE CAN AND WHEN WE CAN."

2. INDIAN OCEAN COMMUNITY: THE SHAH HOPED THAT COUNTRIES WOULD GRADUALLY DEVELOP ECONOMIC LINKS AND FORGE POLITICAL SOLIDARITY. IF EUROPEAN COMMON MARKET-TYPE GROUPINGS "WERE GOOD FOR OTHER COUNTRIES, WHY NOT FOR US?" IT WOULD BE NATURAL FOR THEM TO GO ON TO COOPERATION ON SECURITY TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF SEA-LANES. HE SAID THAT HE HAD FOUND "PROFOUND INTEREST" IN HIS IDEA IN AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, INDONESIA, AND SINGAPORE. HE ENVISAGED RAIL AND ROAD LINKS IN THE REGION. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN DID COME IN THE WAY, BUT "I AM SURE PAKISTAN IS NOT GOING TO ISOLATE ITSELF IF ALL OTHERS WORK IN THE OTHER DIRECTION." HE APPEARED SLIGHTLY IRRITATED WHEN ASKED WHY HE WAS CANVASSING SUPPORT FOR HIS IDEA TO THE EAST OF IRAN RATHER THAN TO THE WEST. HE EXPLAINED THAT IRAN DID NOT HAVE TO SEEK REGIONAL COOPERATION. THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT WAS STILL GOING ON TO THE WEST; HE WOULD TAKE UP HIS IDEA THERE LATER.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 NEW DE 13295 041635Z

3. OIL PRICING: OIL COMPANY PRICES WERE "OBSCENE"; THEY SHOULD GET ONLY 40 TO 50 CENTS A BARREL. HE REPEATED HIS STATEMENT THAT NOBODY COULD DICTATE TO IRAN. IF THERE WAS GOING TO BE A SHARING OF RESOURCES, "WE CAN SHARE MANY THINGS WHICH THE UNITED STATES HAS," HE SAID. HE REJECTED THE IDEA OF TWO-TIER PRICE SYSTEM FOR DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, RESPECTIVELY, FAVORING INSTEAD HIS

PROPOSAL FOR A LOAN FUND JOINTLY SUBSCRIBED TO BY THE OIL COUNTRIES AND BY THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES WHICH COULD PROVIDE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WITH DOLS2.5 TO DOLS3 BILLION OVER THREE TO FIVE YEARS ON SOFT TERMS.

4. IRAQ: IRAN HAD ALWAYS BEEN READY FOR NEGOTIATIONS. "BUT SO LONG AS IRAQ THINKS THEY ARE HEIR TO THE FORMER BRITISH COLONIAL EMPIRE IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT TO SETTLE THE PROBLEM." IRAN ONLY ASKS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNATIONAL REGULATIONS; "THE DAY THEY ARE READY TO ACCEPT THAT, THERE WOULD BE NO PROBLEM, AT LEAST FROM OUR SIDE."

5. DIEGO GARCIA: THE SHAH WAS IN FAVOR OF THE GREAT POWERS LEAVING THE INDIAN OCEAN ALONE. BUT NOTE HAD TO BE TAKEN OF REPORTS THAT SOVIET NAVAL VESSELS HAD SPENT 9,000 SHIP-DAYS IN THE OCEAN IN ONE YEAR ALONE. "HOW CAN WE ASK THE USA NOT TO COME IN," HE SAID. THE AIM SHOULD BE TO GET BOTH OF THEM OUT, HE ADDED.

6. NUCLEAR COOPERATION: IRAN WAS BUYING NUCLEAR PLANTS FROM FRANCE WHICH USED ENRICHED URANIUM AND THEREFORE DIFFERED FROM THE TECHNOLOGY IN USE IN INDIA. BUT FRANCE WOULD NOT NECESSARILY BE IRAN'S ONLY SOURCE OF EQUIPMENT. "ONCE WE START OUR NUCLEAR ENERGY PROGRAM, OR EVEN BEFORE IT, WE CAN HOLD DISCUSSIONS WITH INDIA ON ALL PERTINENT SUBJECTS." SCHNEIDER

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